

NEWS – CONGRESSMAN PETE STARK

239 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

(202) 225-5065

www.stark.house.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 24, 2011

Stark Contact: Brian Cook, (202) 225-3202

Levin Contact: Lauren Bloomberg or Askia Suruma, (202) 226-3354

Health Reform Anniversary: THE REPUBLICAN REPEAL AGENDA HURTS WOMEN

WASHINGTON – This week marks the one-year anniversary of the enactment of the health reform law. The Affordable Care Act is already helping women – giving them access to free preventive care and stopping insurance companies from dropping coverage if a woman gets sick or becomes pregnant. Once the law is fully implemented, insurance companies will no longer be able to discriminate against women by charging them more or denying them care.

Republicans have voted to repeal reform. They want to return power to insurance companies to discriminate against women and ration care. Repeal would also let insurance companies charge more for important preventive care, making procedures such as mammograms and colonoscopies more expensive. If Republicans win, women lose. The Republican repeal agenda would:

- Solidify insurance companies' power to discriminate against women by charging them more for health care or denying them coverage;
- Stop women from getting health coverage if they have had breast or cervical cancer, a pregnancy, a C-section, or were the victim of domestic violence – all considered "pre-existing conditions";
- Allow insurance companies to drop coverage for women if they get sick or become pregnant;
- Force women to pay more for preventive care such as mammograms or colonoscopies;
- Force women to jump through insurance companies bureaucratic hoops to access OB-GYN care;

- Eliminate a new marketplace that will be the only avenue for many women to obtain affordable coverage – currently, less than half of American women can obtain affordable health care through their job.

(Source: House Roll Call vote 14, Senate Roll Call vote 9)

Today, Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), Ranking Member of the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, and Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI), Ranking Member of the House Ways and Means Committee, criticized the Republican agenda for women:

Rep. Stark: "While gender discrimination is illegal in the workplace, it is alive and well in the health insurance industry. Health reform will put that to an end. Republicans would stop implementation of the law and allow insurance companies to charge more and deny health care to millions of women."

Rep. Levin: "For too long insurance companies have been allowed to treat being a woman as a pre-existing condition, dropping coverage for women when they become pregnant and sometimes denying coverage for life-threatening diseases. Republicans' reckless efforts to repeal health care reform would put an end to provisions that are helping to level the playing field and ensure that women aren't subjected to unfair treatment."

For information on how the health reform law is helping women, please visit: <http://go.usa.gov/2jm>

#